

VERMONT TELEGRAPH.

"I AM SET FOR THE DEFENCE OF THE GOSPEL."

BY ORSON S. MURRAY.

BRANDON, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 22, 1838.

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TERMS.

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Vermont Telegraph.

BRANDON, SATURDAY, AUGUST 18, 1838.

The following communication was received on mail too late for the last paper.

For the Vermont Telegraph.

REVIVAL AT SUTTON'S RIVER.
Sutton's River, August, 1838.

Bro. Murray:—As I have seen no account of the recent revival of religion in this place, in any publication whatever, I am disposed to furnish you with a brief account of it, believing it will be interesting to the readers of your paper.

In the month of February last, the Baptist Church in this place decided to hold a protracted meeting, and endeavored, at that time, to secure the assistance of Bro. Grant, the Evangelist; but previous engagements prevented his coming then. He could not be obtained till the first of April. The meeting was commenced the second week of that month, under the superintendence of brother Grant; and his labors were owned and greatly blessed of God. The meeting continued three weeks. The number of hopeful conversions was about eighty. Of that number about sixty have united with the Baptist Church—ten with the Methodist society—and two with the Methodists.

From the commencement of the meeting till the present time we have had occasion frequently to assemble at the river side, "because there was much water there," for the purpose of administering the ordinance of baptism according to the command of Jesus Christ, and agreeably to the apostolic practice. The work has not yet ceased. God is present with his church still. We expect soon to see others following the example of the Saviour, by being "buried with him by baptism." There seemed to be, and still seems to be, a determination among the converts to obey every command of Christ just as it is laid down in the Bible. The cry of "non-essential"—"close communion"—"legals"—&c. could not deter them from being baptized. Nor could pamphlets and tracts, freely circulated, convince them that pouring or sprinkling was baptism, or would answer for baptism.

This inflexible determination not to yield to the traditions of men, has called forth from Mr. Barbour, pastor of the Methodist society, two sermons on baptism. These sermons seem to have been a second, or rather a borrowed, edition of two sermons written on the same subject, and delivered in Rutland, March 1838, by William Mitchell. The absurdities and inconsistencies of these sermons need not mention. They were so gross and so glaring that a school-boy, ten years old, ought to perceive them.

All was assertion without proof; and, in fine, the whole was composed of the same arguments that have been handed down from time immemorial: they will not stand in the nineteenth century. Alex.

RELIGIOUS MISCELLANY.

ON THE MIRACLES OF CHRIST.

Dr. Price, in his Dissertation on Miracles, has refuted, with great clearness and force, the common opinion, that miracles imply a suspension or violation of the laws of nature. "Were we," he observes, "to see the motion of water downwards cease at once, at the word of a man, or a river parted in its course, as Jordan was, we should see a miracle; but we could not say that the law of gravitation was suspended; for the water might have gravitated as usual, and the true cause of the event be the exertion of an adequate superior power, to control the effects of gravitation; in which its suspension is no more implied, than in a man's preventing a heavy body from falling, by applying his hand to it. Nor could we in this instance say, that the event was not agreeable to the constitution of the universe; for in order to this, we should be able to discover what the constitution of the universe is, taking in the visible and invisible worlds; and that it excludes all interpositions of a superior power in human affairs." These acute and just observations go far to refute the sceptical system, by representing miracles as the result of the exertion of a superior power, controlling, rather than suspending or violating, the established order of nature.

The whole fabric of Christianity rests upon the credibility of the miracles recorded in the sacred volume. Jesus Christ appealed to the works which he had wrought, as convincing attestations to the truth of his doctrine, and the divinity of

his mission. They clearly indicated the authority with which he was invested. He appeared as an ambassador from heaven, and these were his credentials. "The works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me that the Father hath sent me." Every unprejudiced mind must have felt the full force of this testimony, and been constrained to confess, with Nicodemus, "We know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." The Pharisees, indeed, with a few exceptions, adopted a singular hypothesis, to account for those astonishing results, the reality of which they could not possibly doubt or deny: they traced them to Satanic influence. "He casteth out devils through Beelzebub the prince of the devils." And it is a fact which shews the extreme difficulty the early infidels, such as Porphyry, and Celsus, and Julian, found in constructing an argument against Christianity, that they too were compelled to take up so absurd a supposition, representing the miracles of Christ as having been performed by magic or infernal agency. A simple reference to the design and tendency of the works themselves, and the character of their great Author, may suffice to refute this preposterous and malignant calumny. Modern sceptics have, indeed, been ashamed to follow in this line of argument, deeming it more safe and prudent to call in question the reality of the miracles, than to resort to such a mode of explaining them away.

When we contemplate the miracles of Christ, the first thing that strikes us is their number. During the whole course of his personal ministry, he continues to exercise his astonishing powers, and multitudes were permitted to experience their healing and salutary efficacy. If only a few solitary wonders had been recorded, some color of excuse might have been afforded to the objector, and the possibility of collusion or mistake more plausibly alleged; but when so many reaped the benefit, and so many more beheld the exertion of this miraculous energy, all reasonable ground of distrust is at once removed. These works were not attended with any circumstances of apparent mystery, likely to excite suspicion. They were performed in the broad light of day, in places of general resort, and before the public eye, so that no deception could possibly be practised: deception here would involve a miracle, no less than that which the supposition is intended to disprove.

Their simple grandeur is also worthy of our notice. There was no ostentatious display; no note of preparation sounded; no attempt to heighten their effect. A word was sufficient. "He spake and it was done." Such stupendous miracles had never before been witnessed. Universal nature was subject to his control. The unruly elements, at his voice, were hushed into repose; infernal spirits fled at his rebuke; and the grave itself yielded up its prey at his command. And yet the wonders which the Saviour wrought were not designed to attract attention, and to excite the feeling of surprise; there was a motive of kindness in them all. They were not like the miracles of Moses in the land of Egypt—displays of awful justice, destructive in their tendency, and appalling to the eye. They were characterized by mercy. They were the miracles of incarnate love. They displayed, in a striking and beautiful manner, the benignity of his nature, and the tenderness of his heart; his deep sympathy with suffering humanity; his readiness to relieve its wretchedness, and to mitigate its woe. He scattered blessings around his path with a profuse, unsparring hand. Never did the cry of distress appeal to him in vain. Never was the humble suppliant sent empty away. There was no variety or depth of human sorrow which he did not soften or remove.

But there is one point of view in which the miracles of Christ have not, perhaps, been sufficiently regarded. I allude to their emblematic nature. They are full of meaning; fraught with salutary instruction.—Thus, when he opened the eyes of the blind, it was an emblem of that spiritual illumination which he alone has power to impart. Mankind are universally sunk in a state of deep and deplorable ignorance; blind to their present condition and their future destiny; unconscious of their guilt and of their danger; and therefore unconcerned respecting the way of escape. But he who gave sight to the bodily eye, can pour the light of truth on the benighted soul, and dissipate that moral darkness in which it is involved.

When to the deaf he restored the faculty of hearing, it was significant of that influence by which he inclines the reluctant ear to listen to the warning and inviting voice, with which he speaks to us in the Gospel. Apart from that gracious influence, man would continue deaf to all the admonitions and entreaties, the threatenings and the promises which are contained in the Scriptures; and neither the thunders of a violated law, nor the sweet accents of mercy, could arrest the vagrant attention, alarm or soothe the spirit.

Even the loosening of the tongue of the dumb was not without its emblematic meaning. How many indeed, are there, who can converse freely and fluently on trifles, but when any serious subject is introduced in conversation, they appear as if suddenly their lips were sealed; a dead silence ensues; for the theme

has no charm for them. Many there are, whose tongue can readily articulate profane or profligate expressions, but was never tuned to praise; and from whose mouth the breath of a prayer never ascended.—He who can renovate our fallen nature, can unloose the stammering tongue, and teach us a new dialect, the dialect of heaven.

There is a sickness of the soul, as well as of the body. Sin is a malady which has infected every human being; and, however various its symptoms, in each case it threatens to undermine the moral constitution; and if not arrested in its progress, will certainly terminate in death. Who can minister unto a soul diseased? It is beyond the reach of human skill, and none but the Great Physician can effect a cure, and restore it to spiritual health and vigor.

Jesus Christ expelled the demons from their hold on those who were possessed. And although infernal spirits are no longer permitted to tyrannize over the body, they still exert a most malignant and pernicious influence upon the mind. There is an unclean spirit harbored in many a bosom, which pollutes the imagination and inflames every base propensity of our nature. There is a spirit of pride, and envy, and discontent, and malice, and hatred, and revenge; in short, their name is Legion, for they are many, and none but a divine power can drive them from their strong hold in the human heart.

There is not only a natural, but moral death. The human race are represented as being "dead in trespasses and sins." No glow of grateful feeling warming the bosom; no holy animation lighting up the countenance; no sacred activity in the service of God; nothing, in fact, to indicate that the feeble spark of spiritual life is not quite extinct. The heart is cold; the pulse of piety has ceased to beat; all is chill and motionless, and insensible as death. But there is a voice which can awake the dead to spiritual life. "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live."

When he calmed the rough and boisterous winds, and the rolling billows were obedient to his command, was it not to intimate that he can speak peace to the troubled conscience, and quell the turbulence of the passions, and diffuse a sweet serenity through every thought and feeling of the human heart?

One miracle is recorded in Scripture, and but one, which has the nature of a curse rather than a blessing—the withering of the barren fig-tree. Yet what a solemn admonition does that miracle convey; and what a fearful doom may we anticipate, if we are "harren and unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ!"

Unless we bring forth the fruits of righteousness, unto the praise of God, we have reason to tremble lest the withering blast of divine displeasure should, in an unexpected moment, light upon us, and our barrenness prove our everlasting ruin.

The miraculous draught of fishes is the only work the Saviour wrought after his resurrection. And in that work there appears a peculiar propriety, when we regard its symbolical nature. The disciples had been toiling all night, and had caught nothing; but in the morning Jesus appeared to them, standing on the shore, and directed them to cast the net on the right side of the ship; and in an instant it was completely filled. And might they not look on this as an omen of the success which should attend them in their higher and nobler employment, as "fishers of men?" The outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, was the appointed signal for them to cast the gospel net; and what an astonishing success attended this first effort! No less than three thousand souls were on that memorable occasion added to the church! And in all their subsequent labors, the abundant blessing of the Most High rested upon them; and through their honored instrumentality innumerable multitudes were converted to the Christian Faith.

I have thus thrown out a few slight and imperfect hints on an extensive and interesting subject. A wide field of observation opens before us; on which, I trust, some abler Correspondent may be induced to enter and more largely expatiate.—Eng. Mag.

Dying Testimony.

INFIDEL.

"I am taking a fearful leap into the dark."—Hobbes.

"Until this moment I believed that there was neither a God nor a hell! Now I know and feel that there are both—and I am doomed to perdition by the just judgment of the Almighty."—Thos. Paine.

"Oh, I long to die, that I may be in the place of perfection, that I may know the worst of it. My damnation is sealed."—Wm. Pope.

"Thou hast conquered me, O Galilee!"—Julian, the Apostate.

"Oh, for a moment's peace."—A Soldier.

CHRISTIAN.

"The best of it is, Christ is with us!"—John Wesley.

"Almost well."—Baxter.

"Victory! victory!"—Erskine.

"Blessed be God, for what the law has shown to man; blessed be his name for justifying him through faith in Christ; and thanks be to thy name, O God, for having called me to the knowledge of the Divine Savior."—John Locke.

"This is heaven begun; and I have done with darkness forever! Satan is

vanquished! Nothing remains but salvation and eternal glory."—Th. Scott.

"Come Lord Jesus!"—Augustine.

"I long to be with Jesus!"—A Sabbath School Child.

ON THE CAUSES OF IRRELIGION IN THE CHILDREN OF RELIGIOUS PARENTS. The irreligious conduct of the children of pious parents, whether lay or clerical, may, I think, often be in a great measure ascribed to the following, among other causes:—

To the natural corruption of the human heart by reason of the Fall, which is as strong in the children of pious parents as in others.

To early religious restraints, uncongenial to that corruption, and calculated to stir up the bad passions of the heart, when not enforced on the principle of love, affection and duty. Connected with this I may notice the constant recurrence of religious duties, irksome to youthful minds, especially when rendered wearisome by the mode of conducting them, and not making them a pleasing privilege and delightful employment.

To needless severity in discipline; an ill-advised manner of inculcating even religious truth; a want of kindness in giving counsel; and rebuking even improper conduct and tempers in an unchristian spirit, which tends to repel rather than conciliate.

To giving instruction above the years and comprehension of the child; many pious parents seeming to rest satisfied if the memory be exercised, though the understanding is uninformed, and the heart is unaffected.

To visible infirmities in the parent, early noticed by children, and very soon considered as proofs of gross inconsistency, if not of hypocritical profession. I might mention for example, the loss of Christian temper, as already noticed; and the absence of humble patience and meek submission under worldly trials and disappointments, or too great eagerness after the things of the world; or to the indulgence of some besetting sin.

To not early removing children from the improper conversation and bad example of irreligious servants.

To the choice of improper schools. To not carefully and anxiously watching over the first dawnings of the youthful mind, and not giving it a proper direction, before wrong habits are formed.

To taking it too much for granted that our children will, as a matter of course, embrace our own views of religious truth, without care to acquaint them with its evidences, and the evidences of its power on the heart.

To the craft and malice of the great enemy of mankind, in the way of powerful and alluring temptation to the children of pious parents, by suggesting to their minds the failings of their parents; by stirring up the corruption of the evil heart, in opposition to their will and authority; by instilling false ideas respecting religion, the nature of sin, the pleasures of the world, and of happiness, in order to gain and confirm their early disrelish of godliness, and to incite disobedience to the wishes of their parents, and neglect of the commands of God.—Ch. Observer.

YOUTHS' DEPARTMENT.

From the S. S. Treasury.

The Lost Eye.

"It is a great blessing to have the use of both eyes," said a friend to me who had been deprived of the use of one of these valuable organs. "Yes," I replied; "but like every other blessing, they who enjoy it know not how to appreciate it." But pray tell me, how came you to lose the sight of your eye?" "O," said he, it was all owing to carelessness and disobedience. When I was a boy, I had a great fondness for playing with gunpowder. I delighted in nothing so much as exploding crackers, and making little squibs of powder and touching them off.

"One day my uncle was at my father's, and as was usually his practice, gave me a small piece of money. I was delighted with the present; for it immediately occurred to me that I could add it to some I had, and buy a little cannon which a playmate owned, and which I knew could be obtained for that sum of money. I purchased the article, and also some powder, and made several successful experiments in loading and firing my cannon. My parents, on learning for what purpose I had spent my money, reproved me; and admonished me of the thousand accidents that had occurred among children, by the use of gunpowder; and forbid my ever engaging in such dangerous sports again; and very unkindly, as I then thought, took away both powder and cannon.

"It was not long, however, before I devised means to obtain another. Supposing my parents would take that away also, I resolved, that I would have at least one good time with it, before they should learn that I had it. Accordingly, I watched for an opportunity, and one afternoon when my mother was out, I took out my cannon into the garden, and began to load it. The maid servant remonstrated with me, and told me she should certainly tell my parents; but I paid no regard to her. There is nothing like having a good blast, as the boys say. So I loaded up my cannon almost to the muzzle, ignorant of what I was doing. I fired off the piece, and as might be supposed, it burst, and scattered the fragments in every direction. I was wounded in several places, but more espe-

cially in my eye; into which, a piece of the metal was hurled; and from that day to this, I have never been able to see out of it. I was laid upon a bed of sickness for several weeks, and suffered much pain, but it was nothing, compared to what I have suffered since. The thought that it was all owing to disobedience, has been very painful. I have thought a thousand times since, O that I had obeyed the admonitions and instructions of my parents.—Whenever I see a child, disobedient to its parents or guardians, I always think of my lost eye, and wish that they might profit by my unhappy experience."

We hope all the youthful readers of the Treasury, will derive much benefit by reading this story, and remember, that the safest way is always to do what your parents direct; and that God will, either in this or another world, manifest his displeasure against the disobedient.

W.

HALF READY.—A mother was seated at a table with her little son, a child about 8 years old. She had been reading the Bible to him for some time, and talking to him on the subject of death. He had been very attentive to what she had said, and seemingly a great deal impressed by it.

"It says in the scriptures," said she, "Therefore be ye also ready for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of Man cometh." Now this may be said in respect to death as well as to the coming of the Savior, if we cannot tell how suddenly we may be called away from the world.—Are you ready, my son, if it should please God to take you to himself.

The child remained silent for a little while, and then replied, "I think, mother, that I am about half ready."

How many thousands are there just in the same situation as this child! They think they are getting ready; that they will be ready in time, but they know that they are not quite ready. Now, there is no such thing as being half ready for death. We are either prepared or unprepared. And even if it were true that you are half ready, and death should come, what benefit will that half be to you? Will he wait a year, a month, or a day, until you get ready?

Behold, then, your danger. You may be thinking that you have time enough yet for preparation; that you have begun to prepare, and that in the course of time you will be ready for the call of death. Why, a steamboat, a stage coach, a railway car, will not wait for a passenger that is only half ready. When the time arrives, they start off and leave the unprepared behind. O, then be ready, for you may be sent for at an hour when you think not; and all the prayers, and tears, and promises of the half prepared will not cause the messenger to wait a second.—He comes for our own soul, for your soul as it is and God will judge it by what it is; not by what it intended to be if it had more time. Say, before you lift your eyes from this page, are you ready?—Youth's Friend.

From the Annals of Education.

FRATERNAL EDUCATION, OR, HINTS TO BROTHERS.

AM I my brother's keeper? said the murderous Cain. And a more impudent question, considering the circumstances, never was asked. Thy brother's keeper! Why affront thy Maker with such an inquiry? Thou knewest thou wast the keeper of thy brother. Was he not younger than thyself—less acquainted with men and manners, with the world and its tricks? Wast thou not often his only companion, in the absence of both parents? Whist! thou wast tilling the ground in thy little field, was it not thy duty to have an eye to him and his sheep, and fly to rescue either him or them, if need should be, from any signal dangers?

Nay, more; hadst thou not been told expressly, by thine and his heavenly Father—to say nothing of the directions and lessons thou hadst received from thine earthly parents—Unto thee shall be his desire, and thou shalt rule over him? Was not the same thing said by the same all-wise Governor in regard to thy father's duty to thy mother? And did he not always henceforth regard her as under his care? Did he not listen to her inquiries? When she desired knowledge—and her desires were made known to him—did he turn away his ear? Was he not her constituted keeper? And by what rule wilt thou show that thou wast not equally the keeper of thy brother? Was not Abel the only playmate of thy youth, and hadst thou no attachment to him? Thine only brother, hadst thou no affection for him? Thine only ward, and hadst thou no duty to perform towards him? Hadst thou no regard to his health? Hadst thou nothing to do for the improvement of his mind? Had he not an im-

mortal soul, and hadst thou nothing to do to promote its eternal welfare? Did he not look up to thee, his older brother, in childlike simplicity, as almost a parent to him? And did not this expectation and childlike confidence—did not this alow, lay thee under obligation to him? And art thou heard talking about not being his keeper?

Oh, Cain, Cain, where is Abel thy brother? In the absence of his parents, thou wast to be both a father and a mother to him. No other governor present, thou wast to "rule over him." His desires were to be made known to thee, and it was thy duty, and should have been thy pleasure to attend to them. Thou wast to be his instructor and educator, both by precept and example. The lessons heard daily from thy father and mother, thou wast to talk over when alone with him, and it was a part of thy duty to confirm and strengthen in him every good resolution, and assist him in suppressing every vicious inclination. Thine it was to educate him, by thy example, to temperance, purity, chastity, self command, charity, obedience to parents, and love to God and man. Thou wast thy brother's keeper. Thou wast in no little degree, responsible for his health, his manners, his habits, his intelligence, his virtue, his piety. Thou wast responsible, still more, if possible, to thy parents. Thou wast responsible, above all, to Him whose voice from the Heavens now calls thee to an account—Where is Abel, thy brother?

Thou sayest I know not. Am I my brother's keeper? Wretch that thou hast made thyself, lying in to thee a matter of no consequence! Neglectful of thy duty to him, and neglectful of thy first duties to thyself, thou hast suffered the blackest passions to gain an ascendancy over thee, and now the demons of envy and jealousy enjoy a triumph. Thou hast imbrued thy hand in thy brother's—thine only brother's—thine only brother's blood. Thy madly enraged has effected the destruction of the only good man but one on earth. Thou hast slain him whom it was thy peculiar duty to preserve, and instruct, and nourish, and cherish.—Thou hast destroyed him whom it was thy duty to save. And now darest thou lift thy murderous voice, and say thou knowest not where Abel is? Darest thou to tell his Father and thine, that thou wast not his keeper?

And yet every brother is the keeper of his younger brethren, just as Cain was. Not the sole keeper, perhaps, for there are usually others who have the same duty, in a greater or less degree, assigned to them. But this does not lessen your obligations. You are to do all you can, whether others do much or little. You are to use your utmost efforts to make your younger brother every thing which God and nature and your parents have a right to expect you to make him, both by your precepts and daily lessons, and by your example. You are his keeper; and sooner or later will a voice from heaven say to you, Where is thy brother?

You are to take care of his health, so far as you know how to do it. To be sure you are not to do what, for want of knowledge, you cannot do. You are not to instruct him on points on which you are yourself ignorant. Neither your earthly parents are such hard taskmasters as to require of you according to what you have not, but only according to what you have.

You are surrounded on every side by the fruits of the season. Some of them are in a half ripe state, unfit as yet for the digestive powers, and their juices as yet unfit for the blood. Have you not been told so? Will you set your brother an example of self denial in this manner, or will you not only neglect to do this, but even by your example lead him into temptation? Will you assist your parents and him in overcoming the bad habit, by an example of self-denial and moderation? Or will you suffer your example to mislead him still farther? You see him inclined to other habits which you know are hurtful, as lying in bed late in the morning, neglecting proper ablutions, taking very hot or very cold, or over exciting drinks, or using improper food. And will you do nothing towards reforming him?

You are to take care in no small degree, of his mind. Your parents are indeed his principal teachers, but you are, or ought to be, a willing assistant; at least, a monitor. What they inculcate, you should repeat, converse upon, and explain, till it is properly impressed upon the mind. What they direct in regard to conduct, you should enforce, not only by word, but example. Do you not know that an elder brother may thus greatly assist a parent in the discharge of his duties as an instructor and governor? Did you ever know the younger children of a family, or pupils of a school continue long to behave very ill, where the elder set them a perfect example?

You are to take care, also, to the utmost of your power, of the disposition and temper—of the affections of the heart. In this, above all else, you are your brother's keeper. As your temper is, to an extent of which you are probably not now aware, his will be. If you are peevish or fretful, it will be natural for him to become so. If you are excitable or amiable, what should hinder him from being so? If you are slanderous, or revengeful, or cruel, why should he not be? If this should not be the result, it is no fault of yours certainly; you have taken the proper course to produce it.